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If every human soul is invisible, that of the Indian constitutes a mystery. Those who have lived with them for decades and thought they knew the individuals in depth have surprises that are not infrequent.

To be human as he is, the native naturally presents good and bad qualities, like any other human being, some of them taking a color or relief that the environment of deprivation and isolation facilitates and that for this reason stand out more to the eyes of the civilized man who visits them. We shall point out in the following some quite general ones, which for this reason seem to characterize the native mentality and education, admitting that there could be some very rare exception.

1) Intellectual and physical slowness.

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On the one hand, the material life to which they are forced and, on the other, the almost asphyxiating subjection to the tribal laws, which do not allow /138/ discussion, do not leave any room for speculation or, let us say, for the exercise of the theoretical intelligence. This is proved by their difficulty in learning a religious truth and that of the school child in solving the simplest arithmetic problem. For the totality of the school children, the five or six years of studies in the boarding-school regime are not enough for them to be able to learn the four operations. The Indian, just as he is slow in movement physically (2),

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2. Perhaps, studied under the bio-physiological aspect, this slowness could be partially corrected by an adequate dietary regimen. They are certainly receiving some correction, more psychological in nature, during the years that they spend in the Mission, especially the students in the boarding schools.

is also slow in giving us the most obvious response. Slow in understanding an order we give him, he encounters difficulty in following our reasoning when we talk with him. Ordinarily

4: Silva--196 M-4, 5 (1947-1958) 1962 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

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153 As for the memory, he has one a little more awake for the subjects that interest him. Thus he has less difficulty in learning some words or sentences of the Portuguese language, or in reading (4)

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> 4. In 1948 I took to the Museu Salesiano do Índio de S. Paulo /Salesian Museum of the Indian in São Paulo/ the written tests of the children of Pari-cachoeira, after only eight months of school, consisting of a short dictation executed with good penmanship and few mistakes.

and in retaining the names of places, of persons, or in recalling the events. With more difficulty he will learn by heart the arithmetic tables or the prayers. And he also feels happy when the civilized man reminds him of some episode in which the Indian took part. Later, the desire to become "white," that is, to become civilized, moves him. For this reason he adjusts to the great sacrifice of entering a boarding school and attending classes, as well as of subjecting himself to the school discipline.

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2) Practical intelligence.

As for the practical intelligence, it is more highly developed. This is proved by the practical solution of the problems that life presents to him, and with the resources that nature makes available to him. The civilized in those regions, when they do not have other resources available, end up, in certain things, imitating the Indian, or entrusting him with the execution of what is needed. It is enough to point out, for example, the solid and large house /140/ or maloca that he builds, the stable and rapid canoe that he makes, and the numerous objects that he manufactures (vessels, grater, baskets).

4: Silva--211 M-4,5 (1947-1958) 1962 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

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The school children show some inclination and skill for the manual arts: the girl prefers the work in the field and also appreciates embroidery and sewing.

He is also endowed with his talents as a worker. The skill, which we have already pointed out and will point out (see ch. V /see Ch. VI/), the perfection, and the relative speed in the kind of jobs that he traditionally performs are the best proofs.

The necessity to live forces him, for his part, also to face great difficulties in order to conquer nature. It is enough to imagine the sacrifices imposed by the cutting for a clearing, with the means formerly at his disposal. His endurance, for example, for rowing, is worthy of consideration. For other jobs, such as agriculture or digging the ground, he is weak. Although the work rhythm is not intense, but rather is always with the calm that is characteristic of him, and he has better nourishment than in his home, after two weeks the Indian begins to weaken and not infrequently to lose weight; and after two or three months he must be excused for holidays and rest (13).

13. Besides the danger of malaria in the lower Rio Negro, this weakening of the Indian, especially when he lacks his customary foods, condemn the process (that some are already exploring and others, ignoring the circumstances, recommend) of making use of the native hand in the extraction of the piassava, the Brazil nut /Port. castanha, "chestnut," the name of several trees (and their fruit), including the Brazil nut/, or borracha. We think that such jobs can be, or rather must be, performed only by the caboclos, who already have physical endurance and a psychic disposition different from that of the natives.

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804 As a practical means for their calculations, they will even make a small stick the size of an arm span or a handspan: they are, nevertheless, individual and casual measurements.

797 The arithmetic tables already consitute a serious difficulty for
872 the school children, in spite of being a mere question of memory.
803 Those of better progress do not manage to perform the four operations after /258/ three or four years of attending school. And one notices in all great difficulty in solving the simplest problem in mathematics.

804 It seems that it is equally difficult for them to estimate time,
805 as well as distance and area; thus, they are apt to answer that the length of a room is three kilometers and the course of a river, one hundred meters.

c) Astronomy -- Cosmography.

1) The world.

*192 According to their conceptions, the earth, Di'tá, is a plain
823 covered by a regular and solid spherical calotte, which is called Ó mã-se (high thing), the sky, with four doors /Port. pórtas, doors, gates/ corresponding to the four cardinal points, through which the waters of the rivers escape. If these doors were to be closed, the waters would flood the lands and drown all humanity. (Cf. the legend of the snake Sẽ, p.)

[321] They differentiate the clouds into oxkó-kururí, the nimbi, and o'mẽ-kurúri, cirri.

They call the cardinal points "porta" /door, gate/, Soxpé, and designate them as follows: East, Síro-ká-soxpé (back door); West, Pó'té-ká-soxpé (front door, to wit, of the river); South, Kũ'pé-ká-soxpé (left door, from which the Uaupés rises); North, Dyakõ-ká-soxpé (right door).

2) Heavenly bodies and stars.

*192 They do not know how to explain how the stars, Yõxkõá, were
821 formed. All the constellations, however, have a legendary origin. They even assert that the sun, the moon, and the stars are people, Maxsã, according to their legends. As confirmation, it is to be